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978-0-521-48071-0 - Knowledge and the Scholarly Medical Traditions

Edited by Don Bates

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Knowledge and the scholarly medical traditions

However much the three great traditions of medicine – Galenic, Chinese and Āyurvedic – differed from each other, they had one thing in common: scholarship. The foundational knowledge of each could be acquired only by careful study under teachers relying on ancient texts. Such knowledge is special, operating as it does in the realm of the most fundamental human experiences – health, disease, suffering, birth and death – and the credibility of healers is of crucial importance. Because of this, scholarly medical knowledge offers a rich field for the study of different cultural practices in the legitimation of knowledge generally. The contributors to this volume are all specialists in the history or anthropology of these traditions, and their essays range from historical investigations to studies of present-day practices.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To Owsei Temkin and Charles Leslie

Contents

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| <i>List of illustrations</i> | <i>page</i> | ix |
| <i>List of contributors</i> | | x |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | | xii |
| 1 Scholarly ways of knowing: an introduction DON BATES | | 1 |
| Part 1 Scholarly medicine in the West | | 23 |
| 2 Epistemological arguments in early Greek medicine in comparativist perspective G. E. R. LLOYD | | 25 |
| 3 <i>Autopsia, historia</i> and what women know: the authority of women in Hippocratic gynaecology LESLEY DEAN-JONES | | 41 |
| 4 The growth of medical empiricism ROBERT JAMES HANKINSON | | 60 |
| 5 Scholarship and social context: a medical case from the eleventh-century Near East LAWRENCE I. CONRAD | | 84 |
| 6 The experience of the book: manuscripts, texts, and the role of epistemology in early medieval medicine FAITH WALLIS | | 101 |
| 7 <i>Artifex factivus sanitatis</i> : health and medical care in medieval Latin Galenism LUIS GARCÍA-BALLESTER | | 127 |
| 8 Epistemology and learned medicine in early modern England ANDREW WEAR | | 151 |
| | | vii |

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| viii | Contents | |
| | Part 2 Chinese traditional medicine | 175 |
| 9 | Text and experience in classical Chinese medicine NATHAN SIVIN | 177 |
| 10 | Visual knowledge in classical Chinese medicine SHIGEHISA KURIYAMA | 205 |
| 11 | A deadly disorder: understanding women's health in late imperial China FRANCESCA BRAY | 235 |
| 12 | Re-writing traditional medicine in post-Maoist China JUDITH FARQUHAR | 251 |
| | Part 3 Āyurvedic medicine | 277 |
| 13 | Writing the body and ruling the land: Western reflections on Chinese and Indian medicine MARGARET TRAWICK | 279 |
| 14 | The scholar, the wise man, and universals: three aspects of Āyurvedic medicine FRANCIS ZIMMERMANN | 297 |
| 15 | The epistemological carnival: meditations on disciplinary intentionality and Āyurveda LAWRENCE COHEN | 320 |
| | Part 4 Commentaries | 345 |
| 16 | AMOS FUNKENSTEIN | 347 |
| 17 | ALLAN YOUNG | 355 |
| | Index | 361 |

Illustrations

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Plate 1: | Chinese figure, from Hua Shou, <i>Shisi jing fahui</i> | page 206 |
| Plate 2: | Vesalian figure, from Andreas Vesalius, <i>De humani corporis fabrica</i> | 207 |
| Figure 1: | Accumulation and diffusion in Dong Demao's imagery | 264 |
| Figure 2: | Substance and circulation in Dong Demao's imagery | 266 |

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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xi

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-48071-0 - Knowledge and the Scholarly Medical Traditions

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

xiii

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